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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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March 1, 1993

Hon. Donna Searcy, Secretary
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Room 222
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: MM Docket No. 92-157

Cleveland and Belzoni, Mississippi

F. L. V.D

MA 1 J 5 1993

FCC MAIL ROOM

Dear Ms. Searcy:

Enclosed please find an original and five copies of the "Reply Comments and Opposition", filed by Delta Radio, Inc., in the above-referenced rule-making proceeding.

An additional copy of the first page of the instant filing is enclosed. Please date-stamp and return to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

If there are any questions, please advise.

Respectfully submitted,

DELTA RADIO, INC.

(Anny Our

Larry G. Fuss

President/General Manager

enclosures (as above)

copy (w/encl): Mr. Michael C. Ruger - Chief, Allocations Branch

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#### Before the

## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE

Washington, D.C. 20554

Mad J 5 1993

FCC MAIL ROOM

In the Matter of

Amendment of Section 73.202(b)

Table of Allotments,

FM Broadcast Stations
(Cleveland and Belzoni,
Mississippi)

MM Docket No. 92-157 RM-7462

RECEIVED

MAR - 8 1993

To: The Chief, Allocations Branch

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

#### REPLY COMMENTS AND OPPOSITION

Comes now Delta Radio, Inc. ("Delta"), pursuant to Section 1.415 of the Commission's Rules, and submits the following "Reply Comments and Opposition" in response to the "Comments and Counterproposal" filed by Radio Cleveland, Inc. ("RCI"), on September 18, 1992. 1/

#### **BACKGROUND**

This proceeding began with the filing of a petition to amend the FM Table of Allotments, Section 73.202(b) of the

<sup>1/</sup> RCI's counterproposal was released on Public Notice No. 1927, Petitions for Rule Making Filed, February 17, 1993. Thus, the instant Reply Comments are timely filed.

Commission's Rules, by substituting FM Channel 225C2 for Channel 224A at Cleveland, Mississippi, and the modification of license of Station WDTL-FM to specify operation on the higher-class channel; and the concomitant substitution of Channel 292A for Channel 225A at Belzoni, Mississippi, and the modification of the since-expired WJSJ(FM) construction permit of Station to specify operation on Channel 292A. Although the substitution of Channel 292A for Channel 225A at Belzoni required the WJSJ(FM) permittee to change transmitter sites, the then Belzoni permittee submitted a statement agreeing to modify his construction permit to specify a new site. Petition for Rule Making was filed by Larry G. Fuss d/b/a Contemporary Communications, former licensee of WDTL-FM. 2/ The petition is incorporated herein by reference.

### RCI'S COUNTERPROPOSAL

On September 18, 1992, Radio Cleveland, Inc., the licensee of Stations WCLD-AM and WCLD-FM in Cleveland, Mississippi, filed a counterproposal in which they requested the allocation of Channel 292A to Durant,

<sup>2/</sup> The license of Station WDTL-FM was transferred from Larry G. Fuss, d/b/a Contemporary Communications to Delta Radio, Inc., on March 15, 1992, pursuant to BALH-920212HL. Mr. Fuss is President and majority stockholder of Delta Radio, Inc.

Mississippi, as that community's "first local aural service". RCI argues that "Channel 292A would be Durant's first local aural service" and that "the allotment of Channel 292A to Durant as a first aural service is preferable to the upgrade of WDTL(FM) at Cleveland." 3/RCI cites Andalucia (sic), Alabama, 49 Fed. Reg. 32201 (1984) to support its case that new service is preferable over the enhancement of existing service and states that "[i]n the event that the FCC grants RCI's counterproposal and allots Channel 292A to Durant, RCI will promptly file an application for a construction permit for the new channel".

RCI is simply incorrect in asserting that the allotment of Channel 292A will constitute "first local aural service". These is no such provision in the Commission's allotment procedures. Under the allotment criteria set forth in Revision of FM Policies and Procedures, 90 FCC2d 88, 51 RR2d 807 (1982), recon. denied 56 RR2d 448 (1984), conflicting proposals are weighted as follows:

- (1) first full-time aural service;
- (2) second full-time aural service;
- (3) first local service;
- (4) other public interest matters.

(Co-equal weight is accorded priorities (2) and (3).)

<sup>3/</sup> See RCI counterproposal, page 2.

However, as the Commission clarified in the *Report and Order* adopted in MM Docket No. 89-497, released December 4, 1991:

"The first allotment priority is provision of a first full-time aural service. This refers to reception service, not to transmission service. Allotment priority three, first local service, refers to provision of a community's first transmission service." 4/

Thus, the proposal to allot Channel 292A to Durant, Mississippi, must be weighed under Priority Three above. The WDTL-FM upgrade, weighed under Priority Four, would still be outweighed by RCI's counterproposal, however the timing and the circumstances involved in RCI's filing demand that the Commission investigate RCI's filing as a strike petition/application. In reality, RCI's counterproposal is nothing more than a carefully crafted ruse, designed the thwart WDTL-FM's upgrade by proposing a first local service at Durant, Mississippi.

As the Commission has noted in the past "a strike application is one that is filed for the purpose of impeding, obstructing or delaying the grant of a competing application. *Grenco*, *Inc.*, 28 FCC 2d 166 (1971) (Hearing Designation Order) See also *Millar v. FCC*, 707 F.2d 1530, 1535 (D.C. Cir. 1983). In *Grenco*, the Commission

<sup>4/</sup> See Paragraph 5, Report and Order, MM Docket No. 89-497, released December 4, 1991. FCC DA 91-1474.

articulated four factors to be used to evaluate evidence of a motive to file a strike application: (1) the timing of the application; (2) the economic and competitive benefit occurring from the application; (3) the good faith of the applicant; and (4) the availability of other frequencies in the market. 5/

In the instant proceeding, the filing of RCI's counterproposal was timed to coincide with the comment deadline established in this docket. RCI knew that by filing a carefully orchestrated counterproposal, they would be successful in blocking, or at least delaying WDTL-FM's pending upgrade. Additionally, RCI stands to benefit economically and competitively by blocking WDTL-RCI's FM station, WCLD-FM, is a Class A FM's upgrade. facility licensed to Cleveland, Mississippi, as is WDTL-RCI merely seeks to maintain the "level playing field" of competing Class A facilities in Cleveland by blocking WDTL-FM's upgrade to a Class C2 facility. doing so, RCI blocks any potential advantage WDTL-FM might have enjoyed as a wide-coverage facility. Moreover, there have been several opportunities in recent years to have an FM channel allotted at Durant, Mississippi. Had RCI had a

<sup>5/</sup> See Memorandum Opinion and Order, in re: File No. BMPH-880808JZ and BAPH-880609HB, released September 4, 1992. FCC DA 92-409.

serious interest in establishing a new broadcast facility at Durant, they could have done so on at least three opportunities in the recent past, 6/ yet RCI took no action to have such a channel allocated. The fact the RCI came forward with a counterproposal in the instant proceeding is nothing more than a thinly-veiled attempt to block the upgrade of WDTL-FM. As such, the Commission should investigate RCI's good faith in the filing and prosecuting of their counterproposal.

#### **MORE IS NOT BETTER**

As noted in <u>Andalusia</u>, <u>Alabama</u>, 49 Fed. Reg. 32201 (1984) and in the allotment criteria set forth in <u>Revision of FM</u>

Policies and Procedures, 90 FCC2d 88, 51 RR2d 807 (1982), recon.

denied 56 RR2d 448 (1984), the Commission has routinely preferred the establishment of new local service over the upgrade of existing stations. However, it is high time the Commission recognize the mistake of

<sup>6/</sup> Most recently, Channel 247A could have been allocated to Durant. However, that channel has since been precluded by the action taken in MM Docket No. 91-131, substituting Channel 247C3 for Channel 247A at Flora, Mississippi. Channel 273A could have been allocated to Durant, however that channel has been precluded by the action taken in MM Docket No. 89-407, substituting Channel 273C3 for Channel 271A at Lexington, Mississippi. Channel 277A could also have been allocated to Durant, however that channel has been precluded by the action taken in MM Docket No. 89-90, allocating Channel 277A to Kosciusko, Mississippi.

this policy and the adverse affect it has had on the radio industry. As evidenced by the 680+ new stations created under MM Docket 80-90, more is not necessarily better. It does not serve the public interest to allocate FM channels to every town, village and hamlet across the fruited plain, and then have the radio industry suffer from the resulting glut of too many radio stations. As Mass Media Bureau Chief Roy L. Stewart noted at the recent National Association of Broadcasters Convention in New Orleans, the country needs fewer radio stations, not more. Indeed, the National Association of Broadcasters has filed a petition for rule making requesting that the FM allocation rules be amended to prevent "the same kind of oversaturation conditions that the ownership rules were designed to help alleviate." 7/

The Commission should also recognize the abuse inherent with the policy established in <u>Andalusia</u>, <u>Alabama</u>, where competitors come forward, such as RCI has done in the instant proceeding, and crafted a counterproposal designed to block the upgrade of their competitor, simply by proposing first local service at another locale. The Commission should not accept at face value RCI's pledge to "promptly file an application for a construction permit

<sup>7/</sup> See NAB petition for Rule Making.

for the new channel" 8/, especially since there is no Commission Rule or Policy that holds RCI to this commitment and there is no penalty imposed on RCI if they fail the fulfill the commitment. On the other hand, WDTL-FM's proposed upgrade would be permanently barred once Channel 292A were allocated to Durant. As the Commission is aware, once a channel becomes allocated, it is almost never deleted from the table of allotments.

#### ALTERNATE CHANNELS AVAILABLE AT DURANT

Although there are no alternate Class C2 channels available at Cleveland and no alternate Class A channels available at Belzoni, there are other Class A channels that could be allocated to Durant in order to satisfy RCI's expression of interest in applying for a channel at Durant, should the Commission decide RCI's interest is indeed bona fide. As shown in the attached Technical Exhibit, there are at least three other Class A channels that could be allocated to Durant, Mississippi. Moreover, the construction permit for WJSJ(FM), Channel 225A at Belzoni, Mississippi, expired on August 25, 1992. Therefore, Channel 225A could be deleted at Belzoni, without replacement, and Channel 292A could be allocated

<sup>8/</sup> RCI counterproposal, Paragraph 3.

to Durant. Attached is a letter from the Belzoni permittee (Larry Rogers Scott) stating that he no longer has an interest in constructing a new station at Belzoni and requesting cancellation of the WJSJ(FM) construction permit. Scott also states he has no objection to the deletion of Channel 225A at Belzoni.

#### CONCLUSION

As noted above, the Commission should investigate the timing and the circumstances surrounding the filing of RCI's counterproposal to determine whether RCI has engaged in an abuse of the Commission's process by filing a counterproposal simply to block the upgrade of competitor. The Commission should also revise the policy established in Andalusia, Alabama, to recognize that expanded service by existing broadcast facilities should not always be precluded by a petition requesting first local service at another locale. Finally, should the Commission elect to allocate a channel to Durant, Mississippi, one of the Alternate Channels proposed in the attached Technical Exhibit should be allocated, thus permitting WDTL-FM to upgrade to a Class C2 facility as originally proposed.

Delta Radio, Inc., hereby expresses a continuing

-Page 10-

interest in the substitution of Channel 225C2 for Channel

224A at Cleveland, Mississippi, and will, upon

finalization of this proposal, file an application

specifying Class C2 facilities for WDTL-FM. Upon grant of

the application, Delta will construct and operate the

higher-class facilities.

Based on the foregoing, we respectfully request that

this proposal be adopted and the FM Table of Allotments,

Section 73.202(b) of the Commission's Rules, be amended to

substitute Channel 225C2 for Channel 224A at Cleveland,

Mississippi.

In accordance with Section 1.52 of the Commission's

Rules, I, Larry G. Fuss hereby certify that the foregoing

Reply Comments are true and correct to the best of my

knowledge and belief.

Respectfully submitted,

DELTA RADIO, INC.

Larry G! Fuss, President

P.O. Box 1438

Cleveland, MS 38732

(601) 846-0927

March 1, 1993

### **TECHNICAL EXHIBIT**

IN SUPPORT OF
REPLY COMMENTS
OF DELTA RADIO, INC.
IN MM DOCKET NO. 92-157

Prepared February 22, 1993

CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATIONS
Broadcast Consultants
Post Office Box 1787
Cleveland, MS 38732
Phone: (601) 846-1787

Fax: (601) 843-0494

### CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATIONS

P.O. BOX 1787 - CLEVELAND, MS 38732 - (601) 846-1787 - FAX (601) 843-0494

#### **TECHNICAL EXHIBIT**

# OF DELTA RADIO, INC. IN MM DOCKET NO. 92-157

#### INTRODUCTION

The instant proceeding involves the proposal of Delta Radio, Inc. ("Delta"), licensee of Station WDTL-FM Cleveland, Mississippi, to substitute FM Channel 225C2 for Channel 224A at Cleveland, Mississippi, and the modification of license of Station WDTL-FM to specify operation on the higher-class channel. In order to effectuate the proposal, Delta Radio, Inc., also requested the substitution of Channel 292A for Channel 225A at Belzoni, Mississippi, and the modification of the construction permit of Station WJSJ(FM) to specify operation on Channel 292A. The proposal was released on Public Notice on July 28, 1992 (see Notice of Proposed Rule Making, MM Docket No. 92-157).

In response to the Public Notice, a counterproposal was filed by Radio Cleveland, Inc. ("RCI"), requesting the allotment of Channel 292A to Durant, Mississippi, in an blatantly obvious attempt to thwart Station WDTL-FM's

upgrade. The merits of RCI's counterproposal are more fully addressed in the accompanying "Reply Comments and Opposition" of Delta Radio, Inc.

#### **ALTERNATE CHANNELS AVAILABLE AT DURANT**

In filing a counterproposal in this proceeding, RCI did not thoroughly investigate the availability of alternate channels at Durant. Had they done so, they would have discovered that Channel 266A, 268A or 270A could be allocated to Durant (see attached Channel Search studies). Their failure to identify alternate channels makes it even more apparent that their real intent was to block or slow down Delta's upgrade by proposing to allocate to Durant the very same channel Delta was seeking to substitute for Channel 225A at Belzoni, Mississippi.

#### THE BELZONI CHANNEL COULD BE DELETED

Inasmuch as the construction permit for Station WJSJ(FM) at Belzoni has expired, and the permittee has requested cancellation of the permit (see attached letter from Larry Rogers Scott, permittee of WJSJ(FM)), Channel 225A at Belzoni could be deleted without replacement and Channel 292A could be allocated to Durant, as requested by RCI.

#### RCI SHOULD BE BOUND TO THEIR DURANT COMMITMENT

Should the Commission determine that RCI's interests are indeed bona fide, one of the alternate channels noted herein should be allocated to Durant, or in the alternative, Channel 292A could be allocated to Durant, as noted above. However, in the event any channel is allocated to Durant as a result of this proceeding, the Commission should bind Radio Cleveland, Inc., to their commitment to apply for, construct and operate a facility at Durant. To not do so would be to condone RCI's abuse of process in this proceeding.

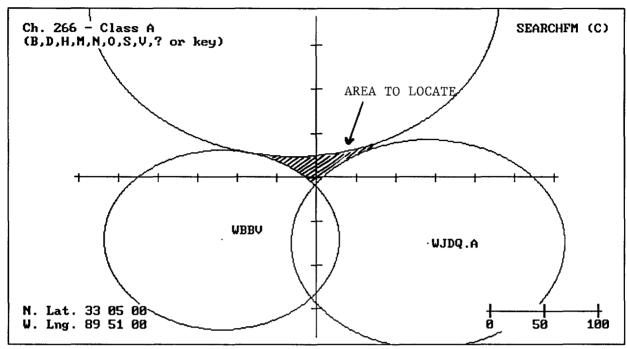
#### **CONCLUSION**

The Commission should adopt the proposal of Delta Radio, Inc., to substitute Channel 225C2 for Channel 224A at Cleveland, Mississippi. In addition the Commission should substitute Channel 292A for Channel 225A at Belzoni, Mississippi, or delete Channel 225A from Belzoni without replacement. If the Commission elects to assign any channel to Durant, Mississippi, it should be one of the alternate channels identified herein.

### CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATIONS

P.O. BOX 1787 - CLEVELAND, MS 38732 - (601) 846-1787 - FAX (601) 843-0494

<u>AFFIDAVIT</u>
State of Mississippi County of Bolivar  Sss.
Larry G. Fuss, being first duly sworn, deposes and states as follows:
1) I am a qualified and experienced broadcast consultant. I have been actively involved in the broadcast industry since 1972 and currently hold a lifetime FCC General Class Radio Telephone License (License No. PG-8-8450).
2) I have prepared numerous applications and rule making petitions which have been accepted for filing with the Federal Communications Commission.
I am the President and Technical Director of Delta Radio, Inc., and in said capacity have prepared the accompanying Technical Exhibit.
The Technical Exhibit, of which this deposition is a part, and the measurements, calculations, studies and determinations upon which this report is based, were prepared by me or under my direction. All material contained therein is believed to be true and correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Larry G. Sun Larry G. Fuss Affiant  FEBRUARY 72, 1993  Date
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 22nd day of February, 1993.  Notary Public  My commission expires:
tommenous interest



DURANT, MISSISSIPPI ALTERNATE CHANNEL SEARCH

Search 02-	-20-93 Current ru CHANNEL 26					01-27-93
CALL	CH# CITY LAT LNG	STATE PWR	BEAR' HT	D-KM	R-KM R-Mi	MARGIN (KM)
LI CY	267C1 Meridian 32 18 43 88 41 33 100 Broadcasters & Publisher nannel 267C	MS 0.000 kW	128.2 177M	138.20 85.9	133.0 82.7	5.20
WJDQ.A AP CY	267Cl Meridian 32 18 43 88 41 33 100 Broadcasters & Publisher	.000 kW	177M	85.9	82.7	5.20
DE266 DE	266A Vicksburg 32 21 34 90 50 08 0 St. Pe' Broadcasting Com	MS 0.000 kW npany	229.0 OM	122.40 76.1	115.0 71.5	7.40 920924
WBBV LI CN	266A Vicksburg 32 21 34 90 50 08 1 Bishop Broadcasting, Inc	.350 kW	146M	76.1	71.5	7.40

LI CN 35 08 01 90 05 38 100.000 kW 137M 142.0 124.3

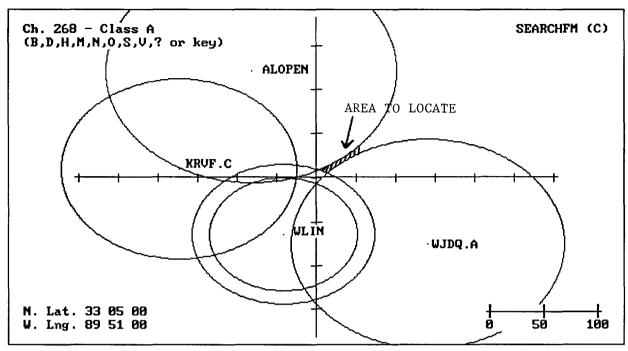
TN 354.3 228.53 200.0

BLH810710AA

28.53

KJMS 266C1 Memphis

Kwam, Incorporated

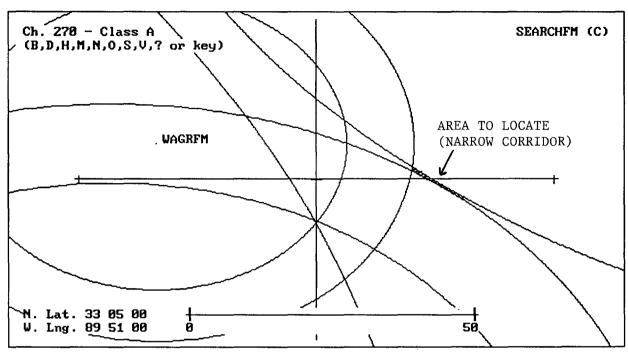


DURANT, MISSISSIPPI ALTERNATE CHANNEL SEARCH

Search 02-20-93	Data	01-27-93
Current rules spacings		
CALL CH# CITY STATE BEAR' D-KM TYPE LAT LNG PWR HT D-Mi	R-Mi	(KM)
WLIN.C 269C3 Gluckstadt MS 204.6 80.07 CP CN 32 25 36 90 12 19 25.000 kW 100M 49.8 Exchequer Communications, Inc BPH92021 >From Channel 269A Per D90-569	89.0 55.3	-8.93 *
WJDQ 267C1 Meridian MS 128.2 138.20 LI CY 32 18 43 88 41 33 100.000 kW 177M 85.9 Broadcasters & Publishers, In BLH6336 >*To Channel 267C	82.7	
WJDQ.A 267C1 Meridian MS 128.2 138.20 AP CY 32 18 43 88 41 33 100.000 kW 177M 85.9 Broadcasters & Publishers, In BMLH90011	82.7	
ALOPEN 268C3 Clarksdale MS 334.6 149.41 AL N 34 18 00 90 32 30 0.000 kW 0M 92.9 89-551	142.0 88.3	7.41
>Effective 5-20-91-Rsvd for WWUN per D89-551		
WLIN 269A Gluckstadt MS 204.6 80.07 LI CN 32 25 36 90 12 19 3.000 kW 91M 49.8 Exchequer Communications, Inc BLH84121	44.8	8.07

#### CLASS A

CALL TYPE	CH# LAT	CITY LNG	STATE PWR	BEAR '	D-KM D-Mi	R-KM R-Mi	MARGIN (KM)
>*To C	hannel :	269C3 Per D90-	569				
KRVF.C CP CN	33 10	Eudora 28 91 16 45 Broadcasters,		274.3 100M	133.75 83.1 BPH88040	71.5	18.75

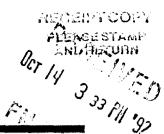


#### DURANT, MISSISSIPPI ALTERNATE CHANNEL SEARCH

Search 02-20-93	Data	01-27-93
Current rules spacings CHANNEL 270 -101.9 MHz		
CALL CH# CITY STATE BEAR' D-KM TYPE LAT LNG PWR HT D-Mi		
WAGRFM 273C3 Lexington MS 286.2 27.13 CP CN 33 09 06 90 07 45 12.500 kW 140M 16.9 Fanny T. Cothran BPH90121 >From Channel 273A per D89-407	26.1	-14.87 *
WLIN.C 269C3 Gluckstadt MS 204.6 80.07 CP CN 32 25 36 90 12 19 25.000 kW 100M 49.8 Exchequer Communications, Inc BPH92021 >From Channel 269A Per D90-569	55.3	
WAGRFM 273A Lexington MS 286.2 27.13 LI CN 33 09 06 90 07 45 6.000 kW 100M 16.9 Fanny T. Cothran BLH90053	19.3	-3.87 *
KNOEFM 270C Monroe LA 244.7 230.34 LI EY 32 11 45 92 04 10 100.000 kW 509M 143.2 KNOE Enterprises, Inc. BLH3131		4.34
WLIN 269A Gluckstadt MS 204.6 80.07 LI CN 32 25 36 90 12 19 3.000 kW 91M 49.8 Exchequer Communications, Inc BLH84121 >*To Channel 269C3 Per D90-569	44.8	8.07

#### CLASS A

CALL TYPE	CH# LAT	CITY	IG	STATE PWR	BEAR '	D-KM D-Mi	R-KM R-Mi	MARGIN (KM)
,		Fulton		MS		178.53		12.53
LI CN				50.000 kW				
	Itawar	nba Cour	nty B/Cas	sting Co.		BLH87070	07KC	



### LARRY R. SCOTT

1605 CARLISLE DRIVE EAST - MOBILE, AL 36618 - (205) 343-0333

October 5, 1992

Hon. Donna Searcy, Secretary FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Room 222 1919 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20554 RECEIVED OCT 1 3 1992

MAIL BRANCH

Re:

WJSJ(FM) - Belzoni, Mississippi

Dear Ms. Searcy:

I am the permittee of Station WJSJ(FM) in Belzoni, Mississippi (File No. BPH-870327KD, as modified). The WJSJ(FM) permit expired on August 25, 1992. By law, an Application To Replace Expired Construction Permit (FCC Form 307) would have been due by September 25, 1992. However, because of other interests, I have elected not to proceed with construction of WJSJ(FM) and respectfully request cancellation of the construction permit.

This is to advise that I also have no objection to the deletion of Channel 225A at Belzoni, without replacement, as I have no further interest in a broadcast facility in Belzoni.

An additional copy of this letter is enclosed. Please date-stamp and return to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

If there are any questions, please advise.

Respectfully submitted.

Larry R. S¢ott

### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Larry G. Fuss, certify that I have this 1st day of March, 1993, sent by regular United States mail, postage prepaid, a copy of the foregoing "Comments" to the following:

Mr. Michael C. Ruger Chief, Allocations Branch Policy and Rules Division Mass Media Bureau Federal Communications Commission 2025 M Street, NW - Room 8322 Washington, DC 20554

Mr. Frank R. Jazzo
Mr. Robert D. Primosch
FLETCHER, HEALD & HILDRETH
1225 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
(Counsel for Radio Cleveland, Inc.)

Larry G. Fuss